



EXTENSION

N.C. Cooperative Extension
Gaston County Center
gaston.ces.ncsu.edu

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Dallas, NC 28034
704-922-2111

Master Gardener | Gaston County

RESOURCE GUIDE

Nov 2023 - Jan 2024

Extension Master GardenerSM (EMG)

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

The following meetings are open to the public and free of charge. All meetings below are held at the Citizen Resource Center (Dallas NC) at 10am.

11/16/23 - Peter Hatch

At this time, there are no programs scheduled for December 2023 or January 2024. Stay tuned for 2024's program schedule!

EMG MISSION

EMG Volunteers support the mission of North Carolina Cooperative Extension by educating residents about safe, effective and sustainable gardening practices that grow healthy people, gardens, landscapes and communities. Their vision is a healthier world through environmental stewardship.



UPCOMING EMG EVENTS

The following meetings are open to the public and free of charge. All meetings below are held at the Gaston County Library (Garrison Blvd) in the Carol K. Reinhardt Auditorium at 11am

At this time there are no scheduled programs. Stay tuned for 2024!

COMMUNITY SEED BANKS



The Community Seed Bank has been established by NC Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Volunteers of Gaston County in partnership with the Gaston County Public Library. Our goal is to ensure access to vegetable, flower and herb seeds and inspire community members to garden.

In 2023 all branches of the Gaston County Public Library will have a selection of seasonal seeds. These seeds are free to the community members. We ask that you limit yourself to 5 seed packs to ensure that all interested can have seeds.

We also encourage you to save seeds from your successful crops to share with others by donating back to the seed bank at the end of the season. Seeds are available February - October.

For questions about the Seed Bank, contact 704-922-2138 or email emgvgastoncounty@gmail.com



MASTER GARDENER INFO LINE

If you have gardening questions that you need answered, our EMG Volunteers are here ready to help. From April - October the Master Gardener Hotline is open. You can call 704-922-2138 and an EMG Volunteer will return your call throughout the week. Alternatively, you can email emgvgastoncounty@gmail.com with your questions or photos that can help our Volunteers better answer your question!

LEAVE THE LEAVES



Scan the QR Code to learn more about Composting and Mulching

It's that time of year again. The time of year when all of our neighbors are out raking and bagging leaves to sit on the curb awaiting pickup. Does the thought of raking leaves have you feeling tired already? Well then we have some good news. You should leave the leaves! Leaf litter can shelter beneficial wildlife, feed your soil, and reduce runoff and erosion when used as a mulch.

Fallen leaves serve as a habitat for insects, birds, turtles, frogs, and lizards that overwinter in the leaf litter. These creatures will keep down garden pests and help with pollination in your garden in the spring. Allowing your leaves to provide shelter during the cold winter will help keep the beneficial wildlife in your garden.

Leaf litter is a source of food for the microorganisms in your garden. Allowing the fallen leaves to serve as a garden mulch will return organic matter back to your soil which lessens the need for fertilizer. If your vegetable garden will be fallow for winter, cover your vegetable and flower beds with leaves to reduce runoff and soil compaction. The leaves will also feed the soil as they break down, doubling your benefit.

In addition to the benefits for your garden, leaving the leaves benefits the greater environment. The EPA reports that leaves and other lawn debris account for more than 13% of the nation's solid waste-33 tons per year. Let's rethink raking and bagging of leaves and instead use them in our gardens for mulch, habitat, and food for the soil.



Caroline Ingram - Gaston County EMG Volunteer

FREE HORTICULTURE RESOURCES



Gardening Publications



EMG Handbook



Organic Gardening



Soil Testing



Weed Management



Plants For Shade

How do I use the QR Codes?

Open the camera on your phone to scan the QR Code and a link will appear for you to click. The link will open in your browser for you to review the information provided.

Can I open the QR Code on my computer?

No. If you are wanting to access this information via a computer, we recommend opening the link on your phone then emailing that web address to yourself to access via a computer.

Can I use my tablet/iPad?

Yes! As long as it has a camera on it, you can use it just like you would on your phone.

FARMERS MARKET

Mount Holly Farmers Market has been a huge supporter of Gaston County Extension Master Gardener Volunteers

The Mount Holly Farmers Market has come to an end for the season. But wait... November 18 is a pop-up market. This market will feature produce vendors, artisans and more. If you are interested in some yummy produce to make a fall stew, homemade breads, fresh brewed specialty coffee, eggs, meats, honey, T-shirt and tea towels featuring local vibes, soaps, glass art, etc., please come shop. If nothing else, stop by and say hello to those who will be representing MGGGC that day. It's been a great year at the market and we look forward to participating again next year.

Heather Dake - Gaston County EMG Volunteer

Scan the QR Code to follow Mount Holly Farmers Market on Facebook



POLLINATOR PHOTO CONTEST

Through the month of August we ran an online photo contest here at Gaston County Cooperative Extension. Members of our community were allowed to enter up to 3 photos that fell into various pollinator categories - excluding birds. We had an overwhelming response with over 300 entries, and allowed the public to vote for one week.

We saw so many wonderful photos and they truly mesmerized us with the talent that we have here in Gaston County. The winner won a \$100 Visa Gift Card courtesy of Master Gardener Group of Gaston County and a \$100 Gift Card to Creekside Nursery courtesy of Creekside Nursery.



Second Place Winner - Renee Witko



First Place Winner - Laura Fongheiser

To view more gardening information and resources provided by Gaston County Extension visit <https://gaston.ces.ncsu.edu>

WHAT DOES BEING AN EXTENSIONSM MASTER GARDENER LOOK LIKE

As an EMG Volunteer, you'll have the opportunity to be a part of the Master Gardener Group of Gaston County (additional fees apply) and network with other Volunteers in the area. The Master Gardener Group of Gaston County have been around since 1991 and have spent the last 30+ years establishing a connection with the community to share horticulture education and awareness.

Other perks include:

- + Education & Volunteer Opportunities
- + Community Outreach
- + Day trips, Garden tours & Informational Outings
- + Monthly Meetings
- + Connecting with others who share your interests



In addition to our community service and educational projects, Master Gardener Group of Gaston County Members enjoy group trips to regional area gardens and farms. A few of our trips this year were to High Point University, All A Flutter butterfly garden, and to Stone Falls Farm.

What is an Extension Master GardenerSM (EMG)?

The Extension Master Gardener program is an educational program designed to enhance public education in consumer horticulture. It provides educational assistance to the citizens of the county concerning lawns, fruits, vegetables, trees, and ornamentals through the utilization of a trained and supervised volunteer staff.



How can I become an EMG?

Our next Extension Master Gardener course will take place Feb 1 - April 25, 2024 in a hybrid format. Coursework will be completed virtually and there will be one in-person meeting per week. Please contact Julie Flowers for an application form. Course fee is \$125 and includes all course material.

MEET AN EMG

"What do I love most about being a part of this organization? Amazing, long-lasting friendships with folks of a kindred spirit. How we learn from one another. We inspire one another. All about sharing and learning."

Barbara Linster | EMG Volunteers since 2004



Do you have questions and want to chat with an EMG Volunteer? Make sure to use our EMG Info Line that is open April - October for all of your questions!

Call 704-922-2138 or email emgofgastoncounty@gmail.com with your questions and an EMG Volunteer will be happy to assist you!

Gaston County Extension Contact

NC Cooperative Extension

Mailing Address:
PO Box 1578 Gastonia, NC
28053

Citizen Resource Center

1303 Dallas-Cherryville Hwy.
Dallas, NC 28034
Phone: 704-922-2111

Lucile Tatum Center

959 Osceola St. Gastonia, NC
28054
Phone: 704-866-3607

Consumer Horticulture Agent

Julie Flowers
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Website

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Facebook

@GastonExtension (Gaston Co. Cooperative Extension)
@MasterGardenersOfGastonCounty (Master Gardener of Gaston Co.)

Instagram

@gaston_county_nc_ces (Gaston Co. Cooperative Extension)
@MasterGardenersOfGastonCounty (Master Gardener of Gaston Co.)

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